

Message Text

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TAGS: EAIR, PO
SUBJECT: MINISTER OF REPUBLIC CLAIMS TWA GRANTED TEMPORARY LANDING
RIGHTS AT LAJES

1. LAJES LANDING RIGHTS: IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE TERCEIRA NEWSPAPER
R
"A UNIAO" PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 8, MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC FOR THE
AZORES GEN. GALVAO DE FIGUEIREDO WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT "AT THE
END OF LAST MAY, THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS HAD,
THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, INFORMED THE UNITED STATES
EMBASSY IN LISBON THAT TWA HAD BEEN GRANTED TEMPORARY AUTHORIZATION TO
INITIATE ONCE WEEKLY FLIGHTS THROUGH LAJES BEGINNING JUNE 1, 1977."
THE MINISTER SAID THIS CONCESSION DID NOT RESULT FROM THE APPLICATION
OF THE REGULAR AIR TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE U.S. AND
PORTUGAL. HE ALSO STATED THAT ON THE ONCE WEEKLY FLIGHT OUT OF LAJES
,
TWA, SUBJECT TO AGREEMENT WITH TAP, WOULD BE PERMITTED TO CARRY
EXCESS TAP PASSENGERS BETWEEN LAJES AND LISBON.

2. FIFTH FREEDOM RIGHTS: ACCORDING TO GALVAO DE FIGUEIREDO, ON
NOVEMBER 10, 1977, TWA WAS INFORMED IT WOULD BE GRANTED ITS REQUEST
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FOR THE SAME "FIFTH FREEDOM" RIGHTS AT LAJES (I.E. THE RIGHT TO
TRANSPORT EMBARKING PASSENGERS TO DESTINATIONS BEYOND LISBON) THAT
IT ENJOYS AT SANTA MARIA AIRPORT PROVIDED THAT TAP BE GRANTED
LANDING RIGHTS AT NIAGARA FALLS, N.Y. (IN ORDER TO SERVE TORONTO).

3. NOTING THAT TWA HAD NOT EXERCIZED ITS NEW OPTION, THE ARTICLE
CONCLUDED BY ASKING RHETORICALLY WHETHER TWA WAS REALLY INTERESTED IN

LANDING AT LAJES. IT ALSO OBSERVED THAT THE MINISTER'S STATEMENT WAS ASTONISHING IN VIEW OF REGIONAL GOVERNMENT CRITICISM OF ALLEGED CENTRAL GOVERNMENT REFUSAL TO ALLOW FOREIGN CARRIERS TO BREAK THE TAP MONOPOLY OVER USE OF LAJES AIRPORT.

4. COMMENT: SINCE "A UNIAO" SERVES FREQUENTLY AS UNOFFICIAL MOUTHPIECE FOR THE MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC, THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE PAPER QUOTED HIM CORRECTLY. END COMMENT.

5. ON JANUARY 9, REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AND TOURISM SECRETARY JOSE PACHECO DE ALMEIDA INFORMED THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER THAT THE MINISTER'S STATEMENT WAS THE FIRST HE HAD HEARD THAT TWA HAD WON LANDING RIGHTS AT LAJES, TERCEIRA. HE SAID THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT WAS ANXIOUS FOR TWA TO LAND AT LAJES AND PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE OFTEN UNRELIABLE TAP MONOPOLY OUT OF THAT CENTRALLY LOCATED AIRPORT. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS HE HAD BEEN CRITICIZING STRONGLY THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT FOR NOT GRANTING TWA LANDING RIGHTS AT LAJES, THE MINISTER'S REVELATIONS OF PRIOR CENTRAL GOVERNMENT APPROVAL OF THESE RIGHTS PLACED HIM IN AN EMBARRASSING POSITION. HE REQUESTED THAT THE CONSULATE SEEK EMBASSY CONFIRMATION AND CLARIFICATION OF THE MINISTER'S DECLARATION. FYI, THE LOCAL TWA REPRESENTATIVE WAS ALSO CAUGHT TOTALLY UNAWARE BY THE MINISTER'S STATEMENT.

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6. POST WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S SHEDDING ANY LIGHT ON THIS SUBJECT THAT COULD BE PASSED ON TO PACHECO DE ALMEIDA.
MACK

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